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HEALTH  
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Rural District of Bridgwater



# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1957



RURAL DISTRICT OF BRIDGWATER

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE 1957

Chairman:

MR. F.W. MOVERLEY

Vice Chairman:

MR. E. STOREY

MR. R.T. ADDICOTT

MR. A.M.P. LUSCOMBE  
(Chairman of Council)(ex-officio)

MR. H.R. HOBBS

MR. R. MEADE

MR. E.R. JONES

MR. A.A.B. ROWE

MR. W.A. KING

MR. C. SELICK  
(Vice Chairman of Council)  
(ex-officio)

MR. G.O. LOCKYER

MRS. M.J. STREET

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1957

Medical Officer of Health:

R.H. WATSON, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

F.A. MAILE, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors:

B.S. YULE, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

W.T. MURPHY, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1957

Health Department,  
Albert Street,  
Bridgwater.

June, 1958.

To:-

The Chairman and Members of the  
Bridgwater Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the District, and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1957. The report is set out in the manner of previous years, so that comparison with former reports can easily be made.

As far as can be judged from a study of the vital statistics, the general health of the District was satisfactory during the year. The figures show little variation from those of the previous year and compare favourably with those for the country as a whole.

In common with most other parts of the country, an epidemic of influenza affected the District during the last quarter of the year. Tests carried out on a number of patients confirmed that the illness was due to the Asian strain of influenza virus. The illness was of comparatively short duration and complications were not common, with the result that although a high proportion of the population were affected, the number who were ill at any one time was not so great as to seriously dislocate industry or essential services. All schools in the Rural District were kept open throughout the epidemic.

The incidence of notifiable infectious diseases continued at a low level, the slight rise over the previous year being attributable to measles, 1957 being a "measles year." Most of the cases were mild and modern treatment of the complications with antibiotics and sulpha drugs has gone far to prevent the serious sequelae which at one time made measles one of the most serious diseases of childhood.

Inadequacy of existing water storage facilities, combined with low rainfall, again resulted in water shortage and the necessity for both the Borough Council and the Rural District Council to restrict supplies for domestic and industrial purposes. Inconvenience was however reduced to a minimum by reason of the fact that it was only necessary to cut off the mains supply from 10.00 p.m. to 5.00 a.m.. Joint consultations between the two Authorities ensured the best use of available supplies, and plans to improve water storage facilities were pressed forward.

The appointment of Mr. W.T. Murphy, as Additional Public Health Inspector, has enabled the Chief Public Health Inspector to implement the Council's policy in respect of house




inspections and slum clearance, and has at the same time made possible the more satisfactory fulfilment of the many other important responsibilities of the Department.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Members of the Council, the other Chief Officers, and the Staff of the Health Department, for the help and co-operation which I have received from them.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

R.H. WATSON.



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## GENERAL STATISTICS

Area ( acres)	86,000
Population ( Registrar General's estimate ) 1957	20,180
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1957	6,000
Rateable value on 31st December, 1957	£ 148,642
Sum represented by ld. rate on 31st December, 1957	£ 617. 2s. 5d.

## VITAL STATISTICS

### Live Births.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	167	146	313
Illegitimate	12	2	14
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	179	148	327
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Birth Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population 16.20

Still Births 8

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births 23.88

Deaths Total number of deaths 244

Death Rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population 12.09

### Infantile Mortality (Deaths of infants under one year of age)

Legitimate	8
Illegitimate	1
	<hr/>
	9

Rate of all infants per 1,000 births 27.52

Infantile Mortality Rate for England and Wales 23.0

Rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births 25.56

Rate of all illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate  
live births 71.43

### Births.

After allowing for inward and outward transfers, the Registrar General's figures show that there were 327 births (179 boys and 148 girls) in the Rural District during 1957, being 6 less than in the previous year. Of these births 14 were illegitimate. This is 4.5% of the total live births, as compared with 3.6% in 1956.



The birth rate in any area will be dependent upon the composition of the population in that area. Obviously a population with a high proportion of persons of child bearing age will have more births per 1,000 of the population than an area with an unduly large number of people in the older age groups. To enable the birth rates of different areas to be compared, the Registrar General therefore provides a comparability factor for each Local Authority area, which renders the birth rate of each area comparable with that of a district the population of which is of standard age and sex distribution. The birth rate for the District adjusted in this manner is increased from 16.20 to 17.50 per 1,000 of the population. The birth rate for England and Wales was 16.1..

Birth rates for the Rural District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
England and Wales	15.5	15.2	15.0	15.6	16.1
Bridgwater R.D.	15.26	14.02	16.03	16.02	16.20
Standardised Birth Rate	17.09	15.28	17.47	17.46	17.50

#### Deaths.

The number of deaths registered in the Rural District during 1957 was 160. Of these 6 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand, 90 deaths of Rural District residents registered outside the District. The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the District was 244, (128 males and 116 females). This was 31 more than in the previous year and gave a crude death rate of 12.09 per 1,000 of the population. The crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution.

The Registrar General therefore supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with that of the country as a whole, or of any other local area. The corrected death rate so obtained was 11.12 per 1,000 of the population, and this is compared with 11.5 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
England and Wales	11.4	11.3	11.7	11.7	11.5
Bridgwater R.D.	9.40	11.77	10.40	10.25	12.09
Standardised Death Rate	8.18	10.00	8.84	9.42	11.12



Of 244 deaths, 149 occurred in people over the age of 70 years. 61 occurred in people in the productive age groups 20 to 64 years, and the following table gives the details of deaths in this age group:-

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	Total
Tuberculosis of respiratory system				1		1
Malignant neoplasm of stomach				1	2	3
Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus			2	3		5
Malignant neoplasm of breast			1			1
Malignant neoplasm of uterus			1			1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms		1	4	4	1	10
Vascular lesions of nervous system		1	2	2	5	10
Coronary disease, angina				3		3
Hypertension with heart disease				1	1	2
Other heart disease	1		1		1	3
Other circulatory disease		1				1
Pneumonia			1	1	2	4
Bronchitis				2		2
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum					1	1
Nephritis and nephrosis			1	1	1	3
Other defined and ill-defined diseases				4		4
Motor vehicle accidents	1	1	1			3
All other accidents	1	1				2
Suicide				1	1	2
All causes	3	5	14	24	15	61

#### Cancer Mortality.

The number of deaths of Rural District residents from cancer was 40 (males 24, females 16) as compared with 31 in 1956. They constitute 16.4% of the total deaths during the year.



The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 40 cases:-

	Number of deaths			
	Male	Female	Total	1956
Stomach	3	5	8	6
Lung, bronchus	7	-	7	3
Breast	-	1	1	2
Uterus	-	3	3	2
Other and unspecified organs	14	7	21	18
Total	24	16	40	31

### Cancer of the Lungs.

Research into all aspects of lung cancer is proceeding, but there is sufficient evidence available to justify a warning to the public that excessive smoking, particularly of cigarettes, increases the risk of developing this type of cancer. It is not likely that any propaganda would have a significant effect on adult smokers, and the most hopeful line of approach to the problem is to ensure that full information on the matter is made available to adolescents through the Education system. It will however be interesting to see just what effect these efforts will produce in preventing an illness which is likely to develop in middle age.

Smoking is largely a personal habit and its hazards and satisfactions are individual. Smoking by one individual, though possibly disagreeable to others, has not been shown to carry risk for others who are non-smokers. There is not therefore much justification, on epidemiological grounds, for controlling smokers in the interest of the community.

It is important that adults should show an example to the young, in regulating smoking and in confining it to reasonable amounts. It is also important to recall that investigation and treatment of lung cancer is very expensive and ineffective, and results in a substantial charge on the rest of the community.

In dealing with any aspect of cancer, care must be exercised not to aim positively at increasing alarm, as cancer already produces a degree of anxiety among many people which is in itself unhealthy and distressing. On the other hand, although the recounting of facts such as those concerning smoking and cancer is bound to alarm some people, the withholding of the information would be harmful and ethically unjustifiable. At the present time doubts are being raised concerning the relationship between smoking and development of lung cancer, and it is important to counter these doubts with the factual findings of investigation carried out in this country and elsewhere.





It is interesting that this year, as in the previous two years, most deaths from lung cancer occurred in males. The ages at which death occurred in the three years combined is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	Over 65	Total
1955					2	4	3	9
1956						2	1	3
1957				1	2	2	2	7

#### Infantile Mortality.

9 infants under one year of age died during the year. This gives an infantile mortality rate of 27.52 per 1,000 of all live births, while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 23.0.

The increase over the previous year was practically confined to an increased number of deaths during the first four weeks of life when death is most usually due to developmental abnormalities over which there is little control.

The following table shows the causes of the nine deaths in detail:-

#### Infantile Mortality during 1957

Cause of death	Under 1 week	1 - 4 weeks	1 - 6 months	6 - 12 months	Total under 1 year
Pneumonia	2				2
Atelectasis	2				2
Meningitis			1		1
Meningitis and toxæmia			1		1
Congenital abnormalities	2				2
Toxæmia				1	1
Total	6		2	1	9

#### Deaths from Heart Disease.

Of the 244 deaths, heart disease caused roughly 1 in every 3 (males 38, females 40). It represented 31% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 3.9 per 1,000 of the population.



### Other Deaths.

9 deaths were due to accidents, of which 6 were due to road accidents and 3 were due to other accidents.

These figures are exactly the same as in the previous year. It is satisfactory to record a continued low incidence of deaths from accidents, other than road accidents. These accidents occur mainly in the home and many of them are preventable. Apart from deaths, home accidents cause much unnecessary suffering and at the present time attention is being directed on a national scale to their prevention. As was indicated in previous reports, it is considered that in this connection much valuable work can be done by the Health Visitors and District Nurses, during their visits to homes and by informal talks with the family when attention can be directed to actual conditions likely to lead to accidents.



CAUSES OF DEATH DURING 1957

Cause of Death	M.	F.	Total
All Causes	128	116	244
1. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	1	-	1
2. Other forms of tuberculosis	-	1	1
3. Syphilitic disease	-	-	-
4. Diphtheria	-	-	-
5. Whooping cough	-	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections	-	-	-
7. Acute poliomyelitis	-	-	-
8. Measles	-	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	2	1	3
10. Malignant neoplasm of stomach	3	5	8
11. Malignant neoplasm of lung, bronchus	7	-	7
12. Malignant neoplasm of breast	-	1	1
13. Malignant neoplasm of uterus	-	3	3
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	14	7	21
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-	1	1
16. Diabetes	1	-	1
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	14	29	43
18. Coronary disease, angina	29	17	46
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	4	5
20. Other heart disease	8	19	27
21. Other circulatory disease	5	9	14
22. Influenza	1	-	1
23. Pneumonia	4	-	4
24. Bronchitis	5	1	6
25. Other diseases of the respiratory system	2	1	3
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	2	-	2
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	-	1	1
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	2	3	5
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	2	-	2
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	4	-	4
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	12	10	22
33. Motor vehicle accidents	5	1	6
34. All other accidents	1	2	3
35. Suicide	3	-	3
36. Homicide and operations of war	-	-	-



## Population.

The estimated population of the Rural District as at June 1957 was 20,180, which shows a decrease of 610 over the previous year. The natural increase in the population, that is the excess of births over deaths was 83, and therefore there was a decrease in population of 693 due to emigration.

It is interesting to note the population changes which have taken place in recent years and the following table illustrates the trend during the past twelve years.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population increase</u>	<u>Natural increase</u>	<u>Net increase due to immigration</u>
1946	-60	66	-126
1947	210	141	69
1948	387	150	237
1949	93	115	- 22
1950	200	82	118
1951	480	58	422
1952	-610	82	-692
1953	840	119	721
1954	160	46	114
1955	- 80	129	-209
1956	400	120	280
1957	-610	83	-693

## PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable infectious diseases which were notified in the Rural District during 1957. The table is drawn up after making the necessary amendments to the original notifications by either the practitioners, or by the Medical Officer at the Isolation Hospital, owing to corrections in diagnosis.

Disease	Cases notified	
	1957	1956
Scarlet fever	2	10
Whooping cough	9	67
Acute poliomyelitis	-	1
Measles	141	37
Dysentery	1	1
Pneumonia	7	6
Erysipelas	-	1
Food poisoning	-	1
Puerperal pyrexia	1	1
Total	161	125





## Measles.

1957 was a "measles year", and the notification of 141 cases accounted for the slight rise in the total notification of infectious diseases over the corresponding figure for the previous year. Most of these cases were mild and modern treatment of the complications with antibiotics and sulpha drugs has gone far to prevent the serious sequelae which at one time made measles one of the most serious diseases of childhood.

## Acute Poliomyelitis (Infantile Paralysis).

No cases of this disease were notified during the year.

Immunisation of children of certain age groups was continued on a small scale during the year and 49 children received the full course of two injections. Follow up, of the children immunised in these age groups, by the Medical Research Council confirmed that the injections conferred a significant degree of immunity, and at the end of the year arrangements were being made for the widespread immunisation of the child population from six months to fifteen years of age, and of certain groups of adults who are exposed to particular risk of contracting poliomyelitis. Intensive research is proceeding into the degree of immunity conferred by two injections and indications are that a third reinforcing dose after an interval of several months may be necessary to produce a lasting effect.

## Tuberculosis.

The number of new cases of tuberculosis notified in 1957 was 16 respiratory and 2 non-respiratory, as compared with 12 respiratory and 3 non-respiratory cases in 1956.

	<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-respiratory</u>
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Number of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at 31.12.57	98	13
Number of new cases during the year	15	2
Number of deaths during the year	1	1

The very low incidence of deaths due to tuberculosis was maintained and reflects the efficacy of modern treatment. The rise in notifications of new cases must serve as a reminder however that tuberculosis remains very much of a public health problem and that considerable effort is still required before it is overcome. All known cases are thoroughly investigated and all known close contacts are invited to attend the Chest Clinic for investigation. The following table shows the sex and age groups of cases notified during the year.

Age:-	Under 5	5/14	15/24	25/44	45/64	65 & over	Age unknown	Total
Male	1	-	4	3	1	1	-	10
Female	-	-	2	3	3	-	-	8



### B.C.G. Vaccination.

In order to raise the immunity to tuberculosis of school leavers, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to all children between the ages of 13 and 14 years, attending school in the Mid-Somerset Divisional Area. 268 accepted the offer and received preliminary skin test, the "Heaf Test", to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tubercle bacillus. 221 of these gave a negative test and were vaccinated with the B.C.G. vaccine. The 47 who gave a positive test did not receive the vaccination, but they and their home contacts were offered the opportunity of investigation at the Chest Clinic. The following tables are a statistical report on these investigations.

#### Positive Tuberculin Reactions.

<u>Number referred to clinic</u>	<u>Non attenders</u>	<u>Already under observation</u>	<u>Number for evaluation</u>
47	2	6	39
<u>Number for evaluation</u>	<u>Normal X-ray and clinical findings</u>	<u>Healed primary focus</u>	<u>Under further observation</u>
39	33	3	3

<u>Contacts.</u>	<u>Normal X-ray and clinical findings</u>	<u>Healed primary focus</u>	<u>Pleural thickening</u>
<u>Parents X-rayed</u>			
41	34	5	2

<u>Siblings over 15 years X-rayed</u>	<u>Normal X-ray and clinical findings</u>	<u>Healed primary focus</u>
5	5	-
<u>Siblings under 15 years X-rayed</u>		
22	20	2

Thus it will be seen that in addition to increasing the natural immunity to tuberculosis of 221 school leavers, this preventive measure brought to light 8 cases of healed primary tuberculosis, 2 cases of pleural thickening and 3 cases which required further investigation. All these cases will be kept under observation by the Chest Physician until he is satisfied that their further attendance at the Chest Clinic is unnecessary.

### Food Poisoning.

No cases of food poisoning were notified during the year. The Public Health Inspectors continue to press for the full implementation of the Food Hygiene Regulations, and on the whole the response from food handlers has been extremely good.



### Diphtheria.

No cases of diphtheria were notified. During the year 143 children under the age of 5 years and 39 children between the ages of 5 - 15 years, were immunised against diphtheria, giving a total of 182.

### Vaccination against Smallpox.

The number of primary vaccinations against smallpox has shown a slight rise as compared with the previous year. A high proportion of all vaccinations are carried out because of the requirements of other countries in respect of immigrants.

#### Persons vaccinated ( or re-vaccinated ) in 1957.

Under 1		1		2 to 4		5 to 14		15 or over		Totals	
P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R	P	R
94	-	9	-	7	2	14	6	8	11	132	19

P = Primary vaccination  
R = Re-vaccination

### GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES

#### Laboratory Facilities.

Pathological specimens are sent to the Laboratory at Musgrove Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Laboratory Service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

#### Hospitals.

Hospitals in the area are administered by the South West Regional Hospital Board, through the Bridgwater Area Management Committee.

The hospitals are:-

Bridgwater General Hospital	72 beds
Mary Stanley Nursing Home	31 beds
Northgate Lodge	60 beds

In previous years reference has been made in this report to the inadequate provision of hospital accommodation in this area for both acute and chronic sick patients. Although this report covers the period up to the end of 1957, it is perhaps appropriate to record that the Bridgwater Borough Council have recently met representatives of the South Western Regional Hospital Board and members of the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh



Area Management Committee to obtain the Board's views on the provision of additional accommodation at Bridgwater General Hospital. The representatives of the Regional Hospital Board confirmed that the Board agreed that existing facilities were inadequate, but as Bridgwater had to take its place in the queue with other hospitals because of restrictions on capital expenditure, it is feared that some considerable time is likely to elapse before satisfactory hospital arrangements will be provided for this area.

The Board also agreed that additional accommodation was necessary for chronic sick cases, and it is to be hoped that a Geriatric Unit will soon be established to ensure the best use of available accommodation, and to facilitate the admission to hospital of suitable cases.

#### Ante-Natal Clinics.

No Local Authority Ante-Natal Clinics are held in the area, supervision being conducted by General Practitioners and Midwives. A number of expectant mothers attend at the Clinic at the Health Centre, Mount Street, Bridgwater, when blood samples are taken for determination of blood grouping, Rhesus Factor, etc.

#### Infant Welfare.

Infant Welfare Clinics, for which the County Council are responsible, are held at Edington, Puriton, Woolavington, North Petherton, Nether Stowey, East Huntspill and West Huntspill.

#### National Assistance Act, 1948 - Section 47.

Statutory action was taken during the year to secure the removal to hospital of one case. This was a man aged 80, who was found to be living under most unsatisfactory conditions.

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

#### Sewage Disposal.

The Council proceeded with the preparation of their schemes to provide adequate sewerage and sewage disposal systems in the larger villages, but progress has been slow and apart from Puriton, no new schemes were undertaken.

At Puriton work commenced on the installation of a pumping plant with a new rising main, so that all sewage is discharged into the Northern Villages effluent sewer, with ultimate discharge to the River Parrett. The elimination of the old unsatisfactory inadequately treated effluents is most gratifying.

Having regard to the difficulty which the Council were experiencing in obtaining Ministry approval for the Sewage Disposal Schemes which were under consideration, the Council





decided to place their Schemes in an order of priority and to concentrate all efforts on securing approval for those with the highest priority. A comprehensive report was therefore prepared on the existing sewage disposal arrangements in all parishes which were under consideration by the Council and a priority for action was recommended.

#### Water Supplies.

As has already been indicated, drought conditions during the summer months led to serious shortage of water for distribution, and because of the greater risk of contamination of water supplies, bacteriological examinations were carried out more frequently than normally. The following table shows the results of these tests, but although many results are recorded as being unsatisfactory, in most cases they were due to surface contamination of the gathering grounds being washed into supply after a period of inclement weather and did not call for any special action. The Over Stowey supply however is in a somewhat different category, as the public have access to the water at source and hence serious pollution could occur at any time. Particular attention is therefore paid to the treatment of this supply.

Supply	Number of examinations	Report	
		Satisfactory	Not satisfactory
1. Fiddington	12	12	-
2. Goathurst	15	11	4
3. Thurloxtan	16	9	7
4. Willoughby	14	13	1
5. Over Stowey	16	12	4



Chemical analysis of the three larger water supplies was carried out during the year and reports obtained were as follows:-

Report of Chemical Analysis of Sample of Water.

Received on 11.7.57

Labelled: Fiddington Public Supply. Tap.

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All results in parts  
per million

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Number of Sample	C.142
Physical Characters	Clear and bright
Reaction	Slightly alkaline pH 7.6
Total Solids	372.0
Alkalinity (as Ca CO <sub>3</sub> )	275.0
Total Hardness	300.0
(a) Permanent	50.0
(b) Temporary	250.0
Chlorides (in terms of sodium chloride)	33.0
Nitrogen as Saline and free Ammonia	0.002
Nitrogen as Albuminoid	0.02
Nitrogen as Nitrates	4.0
Nitrogen as Nitrites	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate	Nil
Poisonous Metals	
Free Carbon Dioxide	2.0
Silica (Si O <sub>2</sub> )	
Sediment	None
Remarks.	The sample is a hard water the hardness being mainly bicarbonate hardness. It contains very little organic impurity.

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Report of Chemical Analysis of Sample of Water.

Received on 11.7.57

Labelled: Willoughby Public Supply. Tap.

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	All results in parts per million
Number of Sample	C.140
Physical Characters	Clear and bright
Reaction	Slightly alkaline pH 7.8
Total Solids	193.0
Alkalinity (Ca Co <sub>3</sub> )	130.0
Total Hardness	140.0
(a) Permanent	40.0
(b) Temporary	100.0
Chlorides (in terms of sodium chloride)	34.0
Nitrogen as Saline and free Ammonia	0.012
Nitrogen as Albuminoid	0.108
Nitrogen as Nitrates	1.0
Nitrogen as Nitrites	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate	0.2
Poisonous Metals	
Free Carbon Dioxide	2.0
Silica (Si O <sub>2</sub> )	
Sediment	Nil
Remarks.	The sample is a slightly hard water the hardness being mainly bicarbonate hardness. It contains very little organic impurity.

---



Report of Chemical Analysis of Sample of Water.

Received on 11.7.57

Labelled: Over Stowey Public Supply. Tap.

---

	All results in parts per million
Number of Sample	C.141
Physical Characters	Clear and bright
Reaction	Very slightly alkaline pH 7.5
Total Solids	115.0
Alkalinity (as Ca Co <sub>3</sub> )	50.0
Total Hardness	50.0
(a) Permanent	
(b) Temporary	
Chlorides (in terms of sodium chloride)	30.0
Nitrogen as Saline and free Ammonia	0.004
Nitrogen as Albuminoid	0.036
Nitrogen as Nitrates	Trace
Nitrogen as Nitrites	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate	0.2
Poisonous Metals	
Free Carbon Dioxide	2.0
Silica (Si O <sub>2</sub> )	
Sediment	None
Remarks.	The sample is a soft water possessing a very slightly alkaline reaction. It contains very little organic impurity.

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## Housing.

During the year 41 houses were erected by the Local Authority. The total number of post war Council houses erected was 629.

Relevant information as regards housing may be summarised as follows:-

(a) No. of temporary housing units occupied -	(i) Prefabs	-
	(ii) Huts, etc.	2
(b) No. of houses found overcrowded		3
(c) No. of houses closed as a result of an undertaking given by the owners or following the issue of Closing Orders		9
(d) No. of houses demolished under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1957.		16
(e) No. of houses made fit during year		32
(f) No. of houses required to abate overcrowding		4
(g) Total number of applications for Council houses at the end of the year		500

In order to improve the standard of houses, considerable use was made of Improvement Grants under the Housing Act, 1949-54.

The following table shows the action taken.

### Improvement Grants made under the Housing Act, 1949-54

No. of applications and houses dealt with by the Local Authority:-

	(1) Received		(2) Approved		(3) Rejected	
	Appli- cations	No. of dwellings	Appli- cations	No. of dwellings	Appli- cations	No. of dwellings
31.7.49 - 31.12.56	143	165	143	165	-	-
During Year	32	37	32	37	-	-

### Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The records given in the Chief Public Health Inspector's report show the number of insanitary conditions dealt with.



# ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

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FOR 1957.

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Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my eighteenth Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1957.

## STAFF.

A second Additional Public Health Inspector was appointed early in the year and commenced duty on 25th March, 1957. The addition of this officer to the staff of the Department made it possible to undertake additional work some of which it had not been possible to deal with in previous years.

The staff now consists of Chief Public Health Inspector, two additional Public Health Inspectors and female clerk. All the Public Health Inspectors hold the Meat and Food Inspectors Certificate in addition to the statutory qualification.

## COMPLAINTS AND NUISANCES.

The number of complaints investigated during the year was 102, a decrease of 26 on the previous year. In most cases nuisances were abated as a result of informal action but it was found necessary to serve 10 Statutory Notices. On inspection a number of complaints were found to be not justified and no further action was taken in regard to them.

From time to time complaints are received in regard to matters which are in the nature of private nuisances and it is often difficult to convince complainants in regard to the difference between something which may be an annoyance or an offence to one's sensibilities as distinct to a statutory nuisance remediable under the Public Health Acts.

Of the nuisances found, 89 were abated during the year. The number of visits made in connection with nuisances was 285.

A special survey of the drainage of all property in the parish of East Huntspill was carried out during the year in connection with proposed sewerage scheme for the village. 236 inspections were made for this purpose.



## WATER SUPPLY.

Samples of water for bacteriological examination are normally taken from five sources of supply controlled by the Council at monthly intervals. During 1957 abnormally low rainfall again produced drought conditions which it was considered constituted greater risk of contamination and accordingly samples were taken at weekly intervals during this period.

A number of samples were also taken from proposed new sources of supply, and before mains were again brought into use after the insertion of new valves or alterations to main fittings and reservoirs. Extreme care was taken in this respect before the new reservoir at Dancing Hill, North Petherton was brought into use.

A total of 127 visits were made in connection with water supply during the year.

## HOUSING.

The number of inspections carried out under the Housing Acts was 975, the number of separate houses inspected being 515. 112 visits were also made in respect to repairs to 81 properties. 43 houses were represented as unfit for habitation and incapable of being rendered fit at a reasonable cost and 27 Demolition Orders and 9 Closing Orders were made by the Council. In 15 cases the Council agreed to accept undertakings to carry out approved works within a stipulated time. Sixteen houses, the subject of Demolition Orders, were demolished during the year.

The implementation of the Council's Slum Clearance programme continued during the year, and proceeded very largely as planned.

It is becoming increasingly apparent that one of the greatest problems to be faced is that of dealing sympathetically with the comparatively large number of single old people or elderly couples living in unfit houses. In many cases these old people own the house in which they live and have insufficient means to undertake reconstruction or the extensive repairs which may be necessary. It is the Council's policy in such cases to do everything possible to avoid hardship and every effort is made to deal with each case in such a manner as to cause the minimum of disturbance and upset. The Council's decision to build small bungalows has already made it possible to deal with some of these difficult cases satisfactorily.

The extent of this problem is shown by the fact that of the 98 unfit houses remaining in the approved Slum Clearance programme at the end of the year no less than 35 were occupied by one man or one woman nearly all of whom are elderly.



## HOUSING (Continued).

A considerable number of re-inspections of unfit houses was carried out during the year and efforts were made to secure the repair of a number found to be capable of being made fit at reasonable cost. It was generally found that although some owners were prepared to carry out work to remedy minor defects there was considerable reluctance to incur heavy expenditure on more extensive repairs. As in previous years, in a number of cases, it was possible with the assistance of an Improvement Grant to secure much more extensive work than would have been otherwise obtainable.

260 visits were made during the year to 126 properties in regard to the reconditioning and alteration of existing houses and the installation of new sanitary fittings.

94 visits were made to houses in respect to which grants were made under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts and the Housing (Financial Provisions) Acts.

92 visits were made in connection with Improvement Grants.

## OVERCROWDING.

Three new cases of overcrowding were discovered during the year, and two cases were abated by informal action.

16 visits were made in connection with overcrowding.





# FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part 1 of the Factories Act, 1937:-

	Number on Register	Insp.	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority	89	30		
Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority				
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)				
TOTAL	89	30		

The 30 visits made were in respect to 21 factories.

	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.	
of cleanliness (S.1)	3	3			
crowding (S.2)					
reasonable temperature (S.3)					
adequate ventilation (S.4)					
effective drainage of floors (S.6)					
adequate conveniences (S.7)					
Insufficient lighting or defective not separate for sexes	2			1	
offences against the Act (not including offences relating to work)					
TOTAL	5	3		1	



## BAKEHOUSES.

Seventeen visits were made in respect to 10 of the 14 bakehouses in the District at the end of the year, and informal notices were duly complied with. Two bakehouses closed during the year.

## SHOPS.

Eighty three inspections of shops were carried out, in respect to 70 of the 118 shops in the District.

## GENERAL SANITATION.

The following improvements were carried out, generally as a result of informal action:-

W.Cs.	46
Baths	17
Sinks	19
Drainage systems	19
Lavatory basins	23
Connections to water main	3
Connections to sewer	25
Larders	1

A number of other minor improvements were also carried out.

## FOOD HYGIENE.

It has been possible to increase the rate of inspection of food premises during the year and 166 visits have been made for this purpose to 95 establishments. Nine visits have also been made to school kitchens. These visits are in addition to those in respect to dairies, bakehouses, ice cream premises, licensed premises and slaughterhouses which are dealt with elsewhere in this report.

There is a distinct advance in the standard of hygiene in food premises but there is still considerable room for improvement at a number of establishments. A good deal of work has been carried out as a result of informal letters, and as a general rule proprietors of food premises have been co-operative. Where there are two or more shops of the same type in a village competition is keen and this may lead to improvements in equipment such as the installation of refrigerators and refrigerated display counters in an endeavour to attract or retain custom. This tendency is particularly noticeable in the larger villages where modern shops are being erected by a multiple firm and in areas where mobile shops are operating.



## FOOD HYGIENE (Continued).

### Number and Types of Food Premises.

Licensed houses and Clubs	74
Cafes	14
Guest Houses	12
Food Shops	87
Butchers Shops	12
Bakers and Confectioners	14
Fish Shops	3
Fried Fish Shops	1
School Kitchens	32

### LICENSED PREMISES.

New sanitary conveniences for both sexes were provided at one licensed house, and for ladies at another. Seventeen inspections of licensed premises were carried out.

### MEAT AND FOODS.

A new wholesale slaughterhouse at Puriton came into operation in June.

There are now nine licensed slaughterhouses in the District, four of which are engaged in the wholesale trade. Slaughtering in these four premises takes place on five days a week and in consequence a considerable amount of time has to be devoted to meat inspection particularly at weekends when the greatest number of animals are killed. Every effort is made to inspect as much meat as possible but by reason of the wide area over which the slaughterhouses are situated and the fact that the maximum kill in each of the wholesale slaughterhouses takes place at approximately the same time 100% meat inspection is still impracticable.

24,400 animals were inspected during the year - 653 beasts, 316 cows, 15,000 calves, 4,317 sheep and 4,114 pigs. 1,293 visits were made in connection with the inspection of meat, giving an average of 19 animals inspected per visit.

The number of animals inspected was 3,691 fewer than in 1956. This is accounted for by the fact that fewer animals were sent in for slaughter. During the summer months in particular there was an extreme shortage of calves, and 3,519 fewer calves were inspected than in the previous year.

Approximately 11 tons of meat was condemned during the year, details of which are as follows:-



MEAT AND FOODS (Continued).

Beasts.

Carcases and organs	2
Heads and tongues	25
Livers	27
Lungs	26
Hearts	6
Kidneys	1
Spleens	4
Beef	114 lbs.

Cows.

Carcases and organs	15
Heads and tongues	21
Livers	69
Lungs	25
Mesentery and intestines	1
Kidneys	7
Plucks	1
Beef	816 lbs.

Calves.

Carcases and organs	37
Livers	10
Lungs	3
Kidneys	32
Plucks	7
Spleens	6
Veal	106 lbs.

Sheep.

Carcases and organs	37
Heads and tongues	4
Livers	100
Lungs	67
Kidneys	2
Plucks	5
Mutton	252 lbs.

Pigs.

Carcases and organs	28
Heads and tongues	72
Livers	54
Lungs	143
Mesentery and intestines	1
Hearts	1
Kidneys	12
Plucks	26
Pork	236 lbs.





carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during year:-

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number inspected	653	316	15,000	4,317	4,114	-
All diseases except tuberculosis - whole carcasses condemned	1	9	34	37	24	-
carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	54	100	62	191	239	-
of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and cysticerci	8.4	34.5	.64	5.3	6.4	-
<u>tuberculosis only</u> - whole carcasses condemned	1	5	3	-	4	-
carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	40	34	-	-	82	-
of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	6.3	12.3	.02	-	2.1	-
<u>cysticercosis</u> carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	3	1	-	-	-	-
carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	2	1	-	-	-	-
generalised and totally condemned	1	-	-	-	-	-



## MEAT AND FOODS (Continued).

### Other food condemned.

Three 56 lb. bags skimmed milk powder.

There are nine premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 for the manufacture of sausages, or potted, pressed, pickled and preserved foods.

Condemned food is disposed of to manufacturers of animal feeding stuffs and fertilisers where it is processed and sterilised by steam under pressure; or it is buried on the Council's refuse tips.

## MILK AND DAIRIES.

The number of retail purveyors of milk on the register is 7 and 3 visits were made for the inspection of dairies during the year.

### ICE CREAM.

The number of premises registered for the storage and sale of ice cream at the end of the year was 62, and 4 premises were also registered for the manufacture of ice cream. Each of these manufacturers produced ice cream by the "cold mix" method, followed by boiling the product.

Owing to concentration on other work no samples of ice cream were taken during the year.

A total of 7 visits were made in connection with the manufacture, storage and sale of ice cream.

### KNACKERS YARD.

The knackers yard at Dunball is being maintained in very good condition and was visited on 7 occasions during the year.

### MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

178 visits were made during the year in connection with moveable dwellings.

There are now eleven licensed camping sites in the district, all of which are small. Licences have been issued to station and use thirty five caravans on individual sites.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

11 disinfections were carried out during the year, 18 visits being made in connection with infectious diseases.



### VERMINOUS PREMISES.

22 treatments for the destruction of vermin were carried out during the year; 29 visits were made in connection with verminous premises.

### RODENT DESTRUCTION.

16 visits were made in connection with rodent infestation in addition to those made by the Rodent Operative.

### SUMMARY OF VISITS.

Water supply	127
Knackers Yard	7
Moveable Dwellings	178
Factories	30
Bakehouses	17
Shops	83
Rodent Infestation	16
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	16
Nuisances	288
New Work	260
Housing Inspections	975
Housing repairs	112
Miscellaneous Housing visits	27
Overcrowding	16
Housing (R.W.) and (F.P.) Acts	94
Infectious Diseases	18
Verminous premises	29
Inspection of Meat	1,296
Dairies	3
Ice cream premises	7
Licensed premises	17
Piggeries and poultry farms	3
Improvement Grants	92
East Huntspill Sewerage Scheme	236
Refuse Disposal	7
School kitchens	9
Drains tested	100
Food Hygiene	166

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TOTAL	4,229
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I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and  
Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,

F.A. MAILE,

Chief Public Health Inspector.





